



New Farm to School map is DATCP's first mobile-friendly interactive map

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MADISON – Farmers looking to sell into new, local markets and school districts looking to source locally grown foods now have a new means of connecting. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) has designed an interactive, multi-platform map of Farm to School activities in Wisconsin.

Find the map at http://datcp.wi.gov/Newsroom/DATCP_Maps/Web_Mapping_Applications. The page includes a video overview of the map for new users.

“We are excited to present this tool that will help Wisconsin’s already robust Farm to School program become even stronger,” said Sarah Elliot, DATCP’s Local and Regional Foods program supervisor. “Many people can use this map to develop or improve farm to school activities.”

The map is an easy-to use research tool that can be useful for schools and farms that are participating or want to participate in Farm to School, Elliott said. For example, school nutrition service directors could use it to find districts of similar sizes or geographic locations. They could learn about the programs in these districts or reach out to develop networks, she said. Farmers could use the map to find participating districts that might need local foods. Or they could identify nonparticipating districts and encourage them to get involved.

In addition to highlighting which districts are involved, the map contains information about districts that are buying local foods, have school gardens or are providing nutritional or agricultural education activities. It also indicates school districts that are designing activities such as field trips or tasting events to engage students or community members.

The map indicates schools that are not participating in farm to school programming or did not share information about their activities.

Farm to School is a national program that supports the use of fresh, locally produced foods in school nutrition programs. This interaction benefits multiple participants including the children who get to taste or eat new, fresh products and meals, as well as farmers who can expand into their local markets. Communities benefit economically when local food dollars are spent locally.

Learn more about Wisconsin’s Farm to School programs at http://datcp.wi.gov/Business/Local_and_Regional_Food_Program.

The interactive farm to school map is one of several available on DATCP’s website. It is designed for use on desktop, tablet or mobile device browsers, said DATCP GIS Coordinator Larry Cutforth.